Regional integration among Asian countries

1763. SHRIMATI N.P. DURGA:

SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) to what extent India has succeeded in advocating Trade Block for Asia on the lines of EU for the prosperity and development of the Asian region; and

(b) how India, China and other major Asian countries are striving for regional integration so as to compete with EU and others in the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN): (a) and (b) The Government of India has signed South Asia Free Trade Area (SAFTA) Agreement comprising SAARC members; Framework Agreement with Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) on a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA); Framework Agreement for Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multisectoral Technical & Economic Cooperation Free Trade Agreement (BIMSTEC FTA); Bilateral CECA with Singapore and Bilateral Free Trade Agreements with Nepal, Bhutan and Sri Lanka. There are also ongoing negotiations for bilateral CECA with Thailand and Sri Lanka. However, at present there is no plan of the Government of India to set up Single Asian Trading Block on the lines of the European Union.

Performance of Manufacturing Sector

1764. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD:
SHRI B.J. PANDA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that our manufacturing sector is showing steady signs of recovery and growth;

(b) if so, what is the performance of this sector during 2004-05; and